

North-west Marine Parks Advisory Committee

Meeting #2 Communique

28 October 2019, Broome

The North-west Marine Parks Advisory Committee has been established to advise the Director of National Parks on implementation of the North-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan.

There are 13 Australian Marine Parks in the North-west network. Further information on the Network is available here parksaustralia.gov.au/north-west

Observers at committee meetings include representatives from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCAs) and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) in the West Australian Government.

Meeting 2 was held in Broome on Monday 28 October 2019. Topics for discussion included: the North-west Network Implementation Plan and progress report; a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) system for Australian Marine Parks; and A Communications and Marketing Strategy for Australian Marine Parks. Updates were provided by state park and fishery agency representatives, and there was a presentation on the Kimberley Indigenous Saltwater Advisory Group.

North-west Network Implementation Plan and Progress Report

There will be three Implementation Plans over the life of a 10 year management plan. The foundation phase Implementation Plan (2018-2022) covers activities scheduled during the first four years of management.

Member attendance

Bianca Priest (Chair)
Dean Mathews
Gina Lincoln
Jim Stoddart
John Harrison
Kellie Pendoley
Mat Vanderklift
Michelle Howard
Sean McNear
Aaron Irving (apology)
Jeff Cooper (apology)
Keld Knudsen (apology)
Peter Coote (apology)
Tony Evans (apology)

A report was provided on key activities implemented since July 2018. A summary of these include:

- **Authorisation** – 25 authorisations issued across commercial tourism (5), commercial research (4) and non-commercial research (16) activities.
- **Compliance** – 27 incidents resulting in 3 investigations, the issuing of 3 warning letters and a penalty infringement notice (\$525). Also, the compliance team have established a hotline for reporting illegal activity: 1800 852 975 or marine.compliance@environment.gov.au
- **Science** – Parks Australia commissioned research including the [Benthic Habitats and Biodiversity Assessment of Dampier and Montebello Marine Parks](#) (CSIRO), and the Ashmore Reef Marine Park Environmental Assessment (CSIRO). NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub projects including an [Eco-narrative of Kimberley Marine Park](#), Mapping and biodiversity assessment in Ningaloo Marine Park and

recreational fishing boat ramp surveys in Ningaloo Marine Park. Also, Parks Australia now has a quarterly science newsletter (including terrestrial parks science) that can be subscribed to here <http://eepurl.com/dnntW5>

- **Indigenous engagement** – two meetings with the Kimberley Indigenous Saltwater Advisory Group (ISWAG) to discuss Australian Marine Parks and opportunities for management of sea country. Also, the signing of an agreement with Wunambal Gaambera to improve understanding of cultural values in marine parks.
- **Parks Protection and Management** – Inspections of moorings at Mermaid and Ashmore Reef Marine Parks, and staff participation in incident response training.
- **Communications, Education and Awareness** – attendance and information stalls at both the Whale Shark Festival (May 2019) and Australian Marine Sciences Association conference (July 2019).
- **Tourism and Visitor Experience** – Presentation at the Kimberley Commercial Tour Operators workshop, and correspondence with all State licenced marine tour operators about authorisation requirements for tourism in Australian Marine Parks.

A Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) system for Australian Marine Parks

- Parks Australia are developing a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) system for Australian Marine Parks to monitor the health of parks and evaluate the effectiveness of management.
- Two key components of the MERI system will be 1) a national framework that explains the overall approach, and 2) Network monitoring plans that include outcomes and measurable indicators.
- MERI will inform annual reports and national State of the Environment reporting.
- Committee advice will be sought at several stages in the process of designing MERI, including: preliminary information of values, pressures and use; inventory and monitoring priorities; and evaluation and reporting processes and templates.

A Communications and Marketing Strategy for Australian Marine Parks

- A Communications and Marketing Strategy (2019 – 2023) has been prepared to guide work under the Communications, Education and Awareness program.
- The strategy includes information on target audiences, key messages and delivery channels.
- Committee input was sought on how best to target communications across the North-west Network given the breadth of regional expertise among members.
- An update was provided on existing communication channels including the website (parksaustralia.gov.au/marine), and the Australian Marine Parks Science Atlas (parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/science/science-atlas/).

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held in Perth in June 2020. For more information about the North-west Marine Parks Network or the Committee:

Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/north-west

Email marineparks@environment.gov.au



Photo: CSIRO researchers conducting surveys at Ashmore Reef Marine Park.